

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-11 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 L-03 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DODE-00

PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 NSC-07 DRC-01 /100 W

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R 140458Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6758

INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

COMUSMACTHAI

AMCONSUL SONGKHLA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 14815

E.O. 11652: GDS

TANGS: PINT,TH.

SUBJ: PARTIAL SETTLEMENT OF DUSIT THANI STRIKE

REF: BANGKOK 14811 AND PREVIOUS

1. SIGNS WERE STILL POSTED AND A FEW PEOPLE WANDERING AROUND, BUT AREA IN FRONT OF DUSIT THANI HOTEL WAS VIRTUALLY DESERTED EARLY SATURDAY MORNING FOLLOWING HOTEL WORKERS ACCEPTANCE PREVIOUS EVENING OF COMPROMISE DECISION BY GOVERNMENT'S ARBITRATION COMMITTEE ON MAIN ISSUES OF STRIKE: MINIMUM MONTHLY WAGE AND SHARE OF SERVICE CHARGE POOL. ACCORDING PRESS REPORTS, SETTLEMENT WILL SET MINIMUM WAGE OF BAHT 600 (\$30), AND SERVICE CHARGE SHARE AMOUNTING TO BAHT 800 (\$40); MANAGEMENT HAD REPORTEDLY OFFERED BAHT 500 MONTHLY WAGE AND WORKERS HAD BEEN DEMANDING SERVICE CHARGE SHARE OF BAHT 900, MEANING EACH SIDE WILL HAVE CONCEDED BAHT 100. NEW RULING WILL REPORTEDLY BE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1.

2. HOTEL HAS NOT YET REOPENED AND PRESUMABLY WILL NOT UNTIL AGREEMENT REACHED ON NINE ADDITIONAL, RELATIVELY MINOR DEMANDS ON PART OF WORKERS WHICH ARBITRATION COMMITTEE IS TO TACKLE ON URGENT BASIS.

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3. COMMENT: PRESUMING THAT MANAGEMENT WILL ALSO ACCEPT COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT AND REMAINING ISSUES WILL NOT CREATE MAJOR PROBLEMS, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT END OF 13-DAY DUSIT THANI STRIKE IS NOW IN SIGHT. IF SO, IT WOULD SEEM THAT WISER NEGOTIATING TACTICS WERE USED BY HOTEL MANAGEMENT THAN IN PREVIOUS SIAM INTERCONTINENTAL STRIKE, WHERE MANAGEMENT HAS INFORMED EMBASSY PRIVATELY THAT THEY MISTAKENLY DECIDED TO TACKLE MINOR ISSUES FIRST AND LEAVE MAJOR ISSUES (IN THAT CASE, EXPULSION OF THREE MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT STAFF) TO THE LAST. RESULT WAS THAT EMOTIONS GREW IN INTENSITY AS STRIKE WENT ALONG, AND MANAGEMENT ENDED BY ACCEDING TO WORKERS DEMANDS. AT DUSIT THANI, MAJOR ISSUE SAID TO BE WAGE LEVELS.

4. THE END OF HOTEL WORKER PORTESTS WITH INCREASING INVOLVEMENT BY POLITICAL ACTIVISTS, SUCH AS SEKSAN PRASOETKUN, HOWEVER, IS NOT YET IN SIGHT. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THE ORIENTAL HOTEL IS THE NEXT TARGET. THOETPHUM CHAIDI, HOTEL WORKERS ASS'N PRESIDENT, HAS BEEN SEEING A LOT OF SEKSAN LATELY, BUT DENIES THAT STUDENTS OR PROFESSORS ARE ADVISING HIM. NEVERTHELESS, SEKSAN AND THEOTPHUM, IF THEY DECIDE TO COOPERATE AND POOL THEIR TALENTS, COULD CERTAINLY MAKE THE GROWING THAI LABOR MOVEMENT A POWERFUL SOCIAL-POLITICAL FORCE.
KINTNER

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